

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL
COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



Locus Map



Recorded by: Lara Kritzer, JM Goldson
community preservation + planning

Organization: Hanson Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): June 2018

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form
Number

104-0-10-0

Hanover

HNS.255

Town/City: Hanson

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Address: 297 State Street

Historic Name: James and Lucy Howland
House

Uses: Present: Single-Family
Residential
Original: Single-Family Residential

Date of Construction: Prior to 1879

Source: White's History, Plan 5, No. 61, Page
91

Style/Form: Gothic Revival

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone

Wall/Trim: Wood Clapboard/Wood

Roof: Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: Two-story garage located to south of house, two other structures and a pool are shown on aerial maps but are not visible from the street.

Major Alterations (*with dates*): Addition to west façade in 1958-1960, vinyl windows and replacement door

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ **yes** ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 3.86 Acres

Setting: Located on a winding road through a residential neighborhood of medium sized single family homes centered on large, open lots which are surrounded by dense vegetation and mature trees.

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The one-and-a-half story Gothic Revival style house has an asphalt shingled gable roof with a large gable-end wall dormer at the center of the front façade and a narrow corbeled brick chimney just behind it at the center of the roof ridge. While Gothic Revival architecture was not common in Hanson, several buildings in the immediate vicinity of 297 State Street have the large, steeply pitched dormers and gable ends common to this design, suggesting that it was either the favorite design of an unidentified mid-nineteenth century carpenter or was briefly in vogue in this corner of the community. The house sits high above the road at the top of a short hill that slopes down to the south and east. While the Assessor's map and aerial views of the property show a cross gable addition to the west façade (added in 1958 and expanded in 1960 according to property card records), only the smaller extending additions to either side of the cross-gable are visible from the public way. Similarly, at least two additional buildings and a pool shown to the west of the house on aerial maps are also not visible. The house is wood clapboard sided with wood trim and six-over-one vinyl double hung replacement windows. The roof extends out beyond the gable façades to accommodate a band of wood trim at the eaves which extends around the gable-ends and the wall dormer.

The house faces east and looks down on the road below. The building has a symmetrical front facade with two windows to either side of the center entrance. The wall dormer is centered on the entrance as well, with a single double hung window over it. A heavy band of projecting wood trim extends over the door and projects out slightly to either side but does not appear to be connected to the frame itself or to have been part of an earlier, larger door frame. Below, a Queen Anne style replacement door with an oval window at its center is located behind a storm door. On the east façade, a pair of double hung windows is visible in the gable-end while the first floor has a window in each corner of the façade. There appears to be a flat roofed, one-story enclosed porch in the southwest corner of the house as well, but views of the area are extremely limited. On the west façade, two double hung windows are located in the gable-end over a single double hung window on the first floor. In the northwest corner of the façade, a narrow two-part casement window has been installed instead. To the west, a one-story addition extends north from the cross-gable addition past the original house. The addition has a double hung window on its east façade and appears to have a metal chimney extending through its roof at well. The rest of this addition is not visible from the street.

Set into the hill to the south of the house is a large, two-story gambrel roofed garage. The gambrel roof runs east to west along the sloping site so that its north gambrel-end is only one-story tall while its south gambrel-end is a full two-stories. On the south façade, two windows are located in the wood shingled gambrel end over a solid overhead garage door on the first floor below. A long, winding asphalt paved driveway extends from the street to the garage doors. The site is heavily landscaped with planting beds and mature trees scattered across the sloping grass lawn. The east façade of the house is surrounded by large evergreen bushes and a row of mature trees runs along the north and west property lines.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

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According to White's History of Hanson, this house was formerly known as the "James Howland place" and was believed to have been built by his father, Luther Howland. An "L. Howland" is listed in this location on the 1830 Smith Plan, lending support to White's theory. Luther Howland Jr. (1798-1881) was the son of Luther Howland (d. 1857) and Hannah Oldham (Oldman) who married in Pembroke in 1797. Luther Jr. married Lucy Ramsdell, sister of Robert Ramsdell, a blacksmith living at 316 State Street, and daughter of Olveson and Mary Ramsdell, in 1822. Luther Jr. is primarily listed as a merchant in state and federal censuses in the mid-1800s but is also listed at times as a farmer and manufacturer. The 1856 Walling Map shows the "L. Howland Store" in this location across from the home of R. Ramsdell. His son, James H. Howland (1841-1903), is listed as a farmer in the 1850s but is later listed in both state and federal census records as a tack maker for the Tack Factory. By the 1879 Walker Atlas, there are two buildings shown in this section of State Street belonging to the Howlands. The northernmost one is presumably the former store and is listed as belonging to "L. Howland" while the southern one is listed as belonging to "J. Howland." This map suggests that either Luther Jr. or James built a second house on the land to accommodate a growing family, perhaps in anticipation of James' marriage in 1883 to Lucy Churchill French Howland of Brockton. Lucy Churchill French (1840-1918) was the daughter of Jason and Lydia French and married into the Howland family twice. In 1858, Lucy married Freeman Parker Howland, another son of Luther and Lucy (Ramsdell) Howland. Her marriage to James H. Howland, Freeman's younger brother, in 1883 was her second marriage. Lucy's only child, Lucy Ann Howland Whidden (1859-1946), was from her first marriage.

Although James appears to have lived in the family homestead through at least the 1870s, he died in 1903 while living in Whitman. Lucy Howland and Lucy Whidden inherited the house from James but it is not clear whether they lived at 297 State Street again after his death. White's History notes several other individuals as being associated with the site at unspecified times, and the property was rented out for a number of years after James' death. In 1916, the property was sold to Manuel Enos Silvia, who is shown as living at the property as early as the 1903 Richards Atlas.¹ Manuel E. Silvia (1864-1920) and his wife, Mary E. (1859-1912), had both immigrated from Portugal and were married in 1888. By 1900, the couple had settled in Hanson where they are listed on the U.S. Census as renting the house where they lived with their six daughters while Manuel worked as a barber. By 1910, Manuel owned his own barber shop and two of his children were working at local shoe factories, but they are still listed as renting the home. Mary Silvia died in 1912, by which time the family may already have moved to Hanover, where they are still listed in the 1920 U.S. Census.

Meanwhile, the property appears to have been rented out from the time of its purchase by Manuel Silvia until its sale by his heirs, Manuel E. Silvia, John Silvia, and Mary Pagios, in 1931. At that time Catherine Berigan (1886-1985) of Boston purchased the house with her husband, William H. Berigan (1885-1965). According to the 1940 U.S. Census, William was a gas company inspector while Catherine worked as a member of the Public Welfare Board. William Berigan had married Catherine A. Farrell in Boston in 1910. The family remained on State Street until 1947, when Catherine sold the property to James and Winona Hunter.² The following years, the Hunters sold the property to Adele Duma (1921-2002).³ Adele married Joseph Conrad Dansak in 1949 and the couple lived there with their daughter, Mischia, through the 1980s. The property was transferred to Mischia Dansak in 1984, who sold it in 1987 to current owners Robert and Theresa Bethoney.⁴

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¹ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 1251, Page 351

² Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 1969, Page 416

³ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 2029, page 100

⁴ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 7941, Page 198

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